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To: jgreis@fs.fed.us, dwear@fs.fed.us
cc: scot@dogwoodalliance.org
Subject: Southern Forest Resource Assessment

01/27/02 03:45 PM

Dear Sir:

The conclusion drawn by the Southern Forest Resource Assessment report stating that the current overharvesting of Southern forests and the current management of pine plantations in the Southern regions is 'sustainable,' is grossly inaccurate.

The impacts of the timber industry and industrial forestry are understated. The SFRA suggests that sprawl is the biggest threat to Southern forests, but if current trends continue the estimate is that by 2040 30 million acres of forest will be lost to sprawl, while 250 million acres will be lost to the timber industries for products such as paper.

This SFRA fails to address the ecological impact of intensive pine plantation management, which includes the use of herbicides, genetically modified trees, and fertilizers which have the effect of compromising water quality, biodiversity, and habitat for wildlife. The SFRA also fails to address effects of increased logging on the forests and species that create habitats therein.

Seventy-five percent of pine plantations have come at the expense of native forests, not abandoned agricultural fields as the study suggests.

The conclusion drawn that continued expansion of the paper industry is economically beneficial is also inaccurate. Actually, communities where outdoor recreation is concentrated are much better off economically.

The conclusion that the current management practices are 'sustainable' is based on wood fiber supply and not ecological sustainability. The broad study and conclusion does little to address key areas in the Southern region that are under intense pressure from the timber industry and industrial forest practices, such as the Quachitas in Arkansas.

The conclusions the USFS draws from the SFRA are unsatisfactory.

The ecological tradeoffs for increased expansion in paper products industry are the compromising of the water quality and biodiversity in the Southern forests, and it is not worth it. Our National Forests are in great need of preservation for watersheds, habitats, and outdoor recreation.

Thank you for your time,
Bethany Fitzpatrick
Fayetteville, AR

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